

(English Translation)

Going All Out to Cope with Extreme Weather

Joint Press Conference
16 May 2024

Steadfastly Consolidating Experience to Strengthen Various Measures

- ▶ While weather is always changing, Government is firmly committed to disaster preparedness and resilience
- ▶ Chief Secretary for Administration (CS) has convened meetings of inter-departmental Steering Committee
- ▶ Under CS' leadership, bureaux and departments (B/Ds) have been steadfastly consolidating experience and pressing ahead with formulation and implementation of various strengthened measures, with a view to making full preparation against severe threat possibly brought about by extreme weather to Hong Kong before typhoon season comes

Continuously Enhancing Overall Capabilities in Coping with Extreme Weather

- ▶ 2023 Policy Address stressed that our handling capabilities in respect of **emergency preparedness, early warning, response and recovery** will be continuously enhanced, with **protecting people's safety as our priority**
- ▶ **Four strategies holistically enhanced** to minimise damage to and impact on society under extreme weather:
 - ◆ **Advance preparation**
 - ◆ **Strengthened warning**
 - ◆ **Resolute response**
 - ◆ **Speedy recovery**



The screenshot shows the official website for the Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address. The header includes the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region logo and the text 'The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China'. The main title is 'The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address'. There are navigation links for 'Policy Address', 'Policy Measures', 'Highlights', 'Webcast', 'Press Releases and Speeches', and 'Multimedia'. A search bar is also present. The main content area is titled 'Scale up Capability in Coping with Extreme Weather' and contains two paragraphs of text.

The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
of the People's Republic of China
The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address 繁體 | 简体 | Text Size

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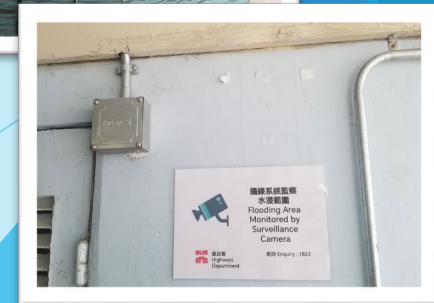
Scale up Capability in Coping with Extreme Weather

45. With global climate change intensifying, it is likely that we will experience extreme weather more often. We will enhance our handling capabilities in respect of early warning, emergency preparedness, response and recovery to minimise the impact on society, with protecting people's safety as our priority.

46. Our preparedness and emergency response to Super Typhoon and the torrential rain in September generally met expectations, but in respect of early-warning arrangements, we were limited by technological constraints. There is, in short, room for improvement in enhancing the early-alert dissemination, including the content, transparency and frequency of the alerts. In dealing with the aftermath, the Government has strengthened its co-ordination and teamwork, resulting in improvement on staff mobilisation and the short time it took to bring society back to normal. Where we can improve is in publicity and education to strengthen awareness of personal safety and safe conducts under inclement weather, and the handling of airport arrivals under typhoon and suspension of public transportation service, etc.

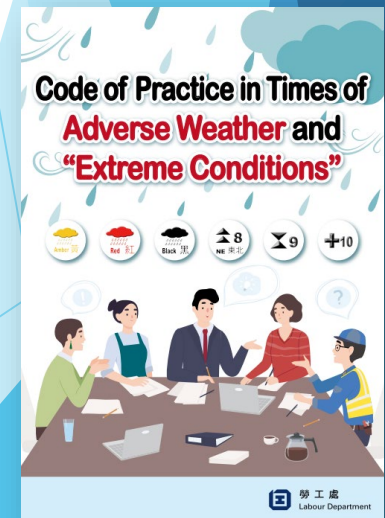
Strategy 1: Advance Preparation

- ▶ B/Ds have enhanced capabilities of different types of infrastructure in coping with adverse and extreme weather, with arrangements made in advance
- ▶ Against risk of flooding:
 - ◆ Flood control infrastructure enhanced; early warning and flood control action plans strengthened; personnel deployed to conduct drain inspection and clearance in advance at flood-prone areas
 - ◆ Water gauge markings put in place in low-lying coastal areas
 - ◆ Warning signs provided on flood-prone roads to remind road users to reduce risk of vehicle breakdown due to severe flooding
 - ◆ Innovation and technology adopted, e.g. remote monitoring devices added to widen coverage of water level monitoring, flood warning systems installed in pedestrian tunnels



Strategy 1: Advance Preparation (cont'd)

- ▶ Against risks of landslides, tree falling and building components falling from height:
 - ◆ Strategic inspection and follow-up work (e.g. drain clearance, crown pruning, works on external walls of buildings) being carried out steadfastly and by phase
 - ◆ Construction managers and property management companies reminded to adopt preventive measures
- ▶ Code of Practice in Times of Adverse Weather and “Extreme Conditions” published in May 2024
- ▶ Publicity, education and enforcement strengthened to warn citizens against chasing wind and wave in times of typhoon, etc.



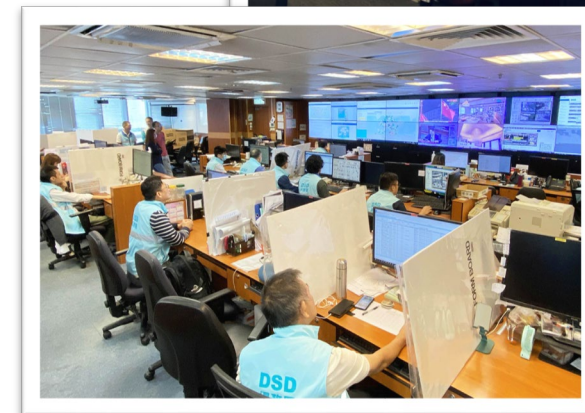
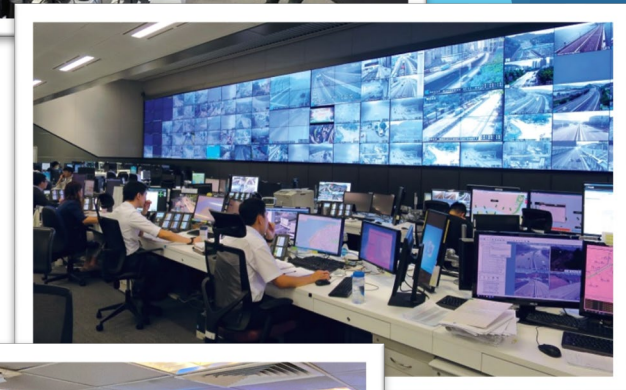
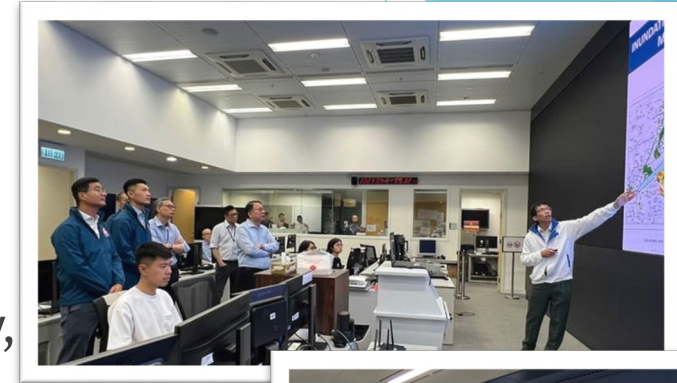
Strategy 2: Strengthened Warning

- ▶ As far as prevailing weather forecast technology permits, Hong Kong Observatory will strengthen efforts of information dissemination as early as possible to give public more time to prepare for possible adverse weather conditions
- ▶ Education Bureau will announce class suspension arrangements for schools as early as possible, so that parents and students can get prepared early
- ▶ When Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 8 or above/Black Rainstorm Warning Signal is in force, videos on latest weather conditions will be released on an hourly basis
- ▶ Updated version of mobile app “MyObservatory” to be launched to strengthen information dissemination
- ▶ Other departments will strengthen dissemination of information about flooding, landslides, tree falling, etc.
- ▶ Waterworks experts between Hong Kong and Shenzhen have strengthened exchanges. When Shenzhen authority starts considering possible discharge of water from reservoir, it will as before notify Hong Kong authority in advance



Strategies 3 and 4: Resolute Response and Speedy Recovery

- ▶ Response and recovery are **intertwined and call for urgent action**
 - ◆ CS: inter-departmental Steering Committee meeting to steer and co-ordinate work on response, rescue, recovery, etc.
 - ◆ Security Bureau: Emergency Monitoring and Support Centre
 - ◆ Transport Department: Emergency Transport Co-ordination Centre
 - ◆ Development Bureau: emergency response system to consolidate, co-ordinate and deploy resources of works departments' contractors, with number of such contractors increased
 - ◆ Drainage Services Department: numbers of response teams and operational bases increased



Strategies 3 and 4: Resolute Response and Speedy Recovery (cont'd)

- ▶ **Safety** as top priority in railway operations
- ▶ MTR Corporation has enhanced emergency response arrangements. To better cater for passengers' needs, trains still operating in open section when Tropical Cyclone Warning Signal No. 9 is hoisted would proceed to:
 - ◆ their original terminals; or
 - ◆ stations with larger capacity to handle stranded passengers or those connected with malls

to the extent safe and feasible subject to actual circumstances for the passengers to disembark safely and take shelter



Strategies 3 and 4: Resolute Response and Speedy Recovery (cont'd)

- ▶ **Safety** as top priority in Hong Kong International Airport operations
- ▶ Airport Authority Hong Kong has set up mechanism to **cope with different scenarios of extreme weather** and co-ordinate with Civil Aviation Department, Transport Department, MTR Corporation, etc., to minimise impact on airport operations and strengthen care for affected passengers
- ▶ When typhoon comes, **consideration will be given to rearranging flights under safe circumstances** having regard to Hong Kong Observatory's forecast, actual weather conditions, etc.
- ▶ **Orderly air traffic will be maintained and effective control of passenger flow in airport terminals ensured**



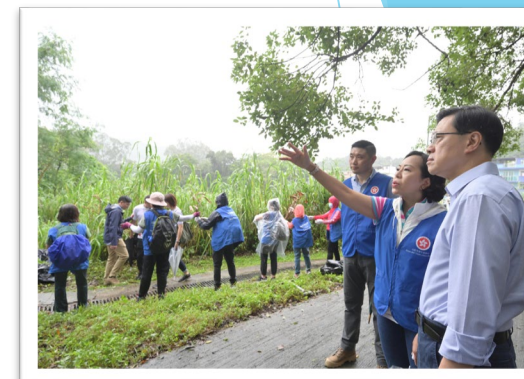
Strategies 3 and 4: Resolute Response and Speedy Recovery (cont'd)

- ▶ On government staff mobilisation, enhanced government mobilisation mechanism was triggered in 2023. Over 600 colleagues in total assisted in recovery work after Super Typhoon Saola and torrential rain hit Hong Kong
- ▶ Civil Service Bureau conducted **second drill under "government-wide mobilisation" level** in April 2024 to enable B/Ds to further familiarise themselves with process and arrangements and strengthen execution capabilities



Strategies 3 and 4: Resolute Response and Speedy Recovery (cont'd)

- ▶ On community efforts, District Offices will mobilise Care Teams to help handle incidents and emergencies:
 - ◆ Disseminate information on preventive measures to residents
 - ◆ Support operations of temporary shelters, etc.
- ▶ District Council members also mobilised to facilitate effective communication between Government and people:
 - ◆ Disseminate information to residents
 - ◆ Pass information about district conditions to District Offices and relevant departments
 - ◆ Take part in relief work



Strategies 3 and 4: Resolute Response and Speedy Recovery (cont'd)

- ▶ On school arrangements, Education Bureau will maintain close liaison with schools
- ▶ Only when school premises and surroundings are confirmed by schools concerned to be safe after adverse weather will students be allowed to go to/leave school

What do rainstorm warning signals mean to you?

When an AMBER rainstorm warning signal is in force

All schools operate as usual unless advised otherwise by the Education Bureau.
Please pay attention to radio or TV announcements about updates on weather, road and traffic conditions.

When a RED or BLACK rainstorm warning signal is in force

If a signal is issued during the following periods, it means that students need not attend school.

At or after 5:30 am and before 8:00 am	AM and Whole-day Schools
At or after 10:30 am and before 1:00 pm	PM Schools

What do rainstorm warning signals mean to you?

If a signal is issued during the following periods, it means that students should continue with their lessons.

At or after 8:00 am	AM and Whole-day Schools
At or after 1:00 pm	PM Schools

Students should continue with their lessons until the end of normal school hours and return home when the conditions are safe.
Parents need not pick up their children immediately.

Points to note:

- Parents and students should pay attention to radio or TV announcements about school and public examinations in the event of rainstorms.
- In the event of unfavourable weather, road or traffic conditions, parents could exercise their discretion when deciding whether to send their children to school.
- Schools will make allowance for students who are late owing to inclement weather or absent on their parents' advice.
- School bus drivers should pay attention to radio announcements about rainstorm updates, and ensure that students are taken to a safe place, usually the school they attend, unless road or traffic conditions are unfavourable.

Education Bureau

**Government has fully geared up to
holistically cope with
potential extreme weather,
steadfastly ensuring full implementation of
measures at all stages to
safeguard people's safety as priority**